

**Amendments to the Specification:**

Replace the paragraph beginning on page 40, line 15, with the following amended paragraph:

The reverse transcriptase-polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR) for SDF-1 and  $\beta$ -actin were performed as follows: Total RNA was isolated from mice bone marrow and using TRI-Reagent (Molecular Research Center, OH) according to the manufacturer's protocol. Each RNA sample (1  $\mu$ g) was subjected to cDNA synthesis in 30  $\mu$ l of reaction mixture containing 1  $\mu$ l Oligo dT 15 primer (500  $\mu$ g/ml, Promega), 2  $\mu$ l dNTP's mixture (10 mM, PCR grade, Boehringer Mannheim), 3  $\mu$ l DTT (0.1 M, GibcoBRL), 1  $\mu$ l RNasin (40 u/ $\mu$ l, Promega) and 1  $\mu$ l MMLV-RT (200 u/ $\mu$ l, Promega) in the supplied reaction buffer (5x, 250 mM Tris-HCl, pH 8.3, 375 mM KCl, 15 mM MgCl<sub>2</sub>, 50 mM DTT; Promega) for 1h at 42°C. The PCR was performed in 50  $\mu$ l reaction mixture using 5  $\mu$ l of cDNA, Taq DNA Polymerase (Promega), 1  $\mu$ l of dNTP's mixture (10 mM, BM) and specific primers for SDF-1 (sense 5' GGA CGC CAA GGT CGT CGC CGT G (SEQ ID NO:1), antisense 5' TTG CAT CTC CCA CGG ATG TCA G (SEQ ID NO:2); PCR product 335 bp). As a control for primer contamination or ~~dimerization~~dimerization the same reaction mixture without cDNA was prepared. The levels of the house keeping gene,  $\beta$ -actin, were determined by the following primers (sense 5' TCC TGT GGC ATC CAT GAA ACT ACA TTC AAT TCC

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(SEQ ID NO:3), antisense 5' GTG AAA ACG CAG CTC AGT AAC AGT  
CCG CCT AG (SEQ ID NO:4); PCR product 347 bp). The  
amplification was performed at 64°C for 1' (35 cycles). The  
resulting PCR products were separated on 1.6% agarose gel  
(SeaKem LE agarose, FMC BioProducts).